

## Lectio Divina

*Activity adapted from Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home by Traci Smith (Chalice Press, 2017)*

Lectio Divina is a practice of reading a text several times and letting the meaning sink in. It's a way to meditate, using Scripture as it's starting point. The practice involves four steps: *lectio* (read), *meditatio* (meditate), *oratio* (pray) and *contemplatio* (contemplate.) Although many people use Bible passages for engaging with Lectio Divina, it can be used with any sacred text that has significance for your family.

All ages can participate in Lectio Divina! Simply pick a reading that is appropriate for the age group. Although these instructions are written for this activity to be completed with at least four different people, you can also do this with smaller groups; just share the reading as appropriate. Or, if only one person is participating, you can also read the passage in different translations to serve as different "voices."

### HOW TO DO LECTIO DIVINA:

1. **Pick a text.** The leader should find a passage that's appropriate for your family. You might pick a favorite Bible story or selection of verses. For younger children, pick shorter passages or even read a story out of a story Bible. You could also use a favorite hymn or poem.
2. **Choose a time to give this a try.** Some ideas of when you could do this are: at a meal, first thing in the morning, right before bed, etc.
3. **Explain what you're doing.** The leader can say something like, *"Today we have the opportunity to hear a passage in a new way. We will read through it four times. Four of us will read it out loud. Each time through we will focus on something different. The first time through we will focus on lectio, which means 'read.' Listen carefully for what this story is about."*
4. **Read the text the first time.** After reading it, discuss your answers to this question: *What would you say, in one sentence, this story is about?*
5. **Give the text to a different person and ask them to read it aloud a second time.** During this reading, everyone should wonder about what the text means. After reading it, discuss your answer to this question: *We already talked about what this story is about, what do you think it means?*
6. **Give the text to a different person and ask them to read it aloud a third time.** During this reading, everyone should think about how they feel when they hear the story. After reading it, ask everyone to explain how they felt when they heard the story.
7. **Give the text to a different person and ask them to read it aloud a fourth time.** During this reading, everyone should listen for what they want to do when they hear the story. After the reading, discuss your answer to this question: *What do you want to do when you hear this text?*
8. **Close by saying:** *"We have had a chance to really think about this story and wonder about what it says, what it means, how we feel when we read it, and what we want to do because of it. It is so exciting that each of us can hear different things as we hear these stories together. Amen!"*